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ADDRESS

BY

HON. J. L. M. CURRY, LL.D.

GENERAL AGENT PEABODY FUND.

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

General Assembly of Alabama,

AT MONTGOMERY,

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PUBLIC EDUCATION.

Address delivered December 1st, 1882, by HON. J. L. M. CURRY, General Agent of the Peabody Education Fund, in response to an invitation extended in a joint resolution of the Senate and House of Representatives of Alabama.

EDUCATION.

In introducing Dr. Curry, Mr. Armstrong, State Superintendent of Education, said :

Ladies and Gentlemen, and Gentlemen of the General Assembly: It is made my duty, which I perform with exceeding great pleasure, to present to you, Dr. J. L. M. Curry, the General Agent of the Peabody Education Fund, who, by the courtesy of an invitation of the General Assembly of Alabama, will now address you on the subject of public education.

Dr. Curry said :

Senators and Representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen—I shall have to ask for your indulgence in my response to your very kind and flattering invitation, because of the severe hoarseness, under which, as you perceive already, I labor, and which disqualifies me for distinct utterance, as well I fear, for rapid if not correct thinking.

In the discharge of my duties as General Agent of the Peabody Education Fund, it has been my privilege to address, through the courtesy of the honorable bodies, nearly every General Assembly in the Southern States. I must be permitted to say in all sincerity, that no invitation has reached me which so thrills my heart and which so overpowers me, as the invitation which I have had the honor to receive from this honorable body. There is no people on the face of the earth whom I love better than I love the people of Alabama. There is no State within the limits of this Union which so commands the homage of my heart as the State of Alabama. Here I came when I was a boy. Whatever is associated with my youth or manhood is associated with the State of Alabama. Her people, in various methods, took me by the hand when I was a boy, encouraged my youthful ambitions, and honored me far beyond my deserts. Looking around me here this afternoon, I note in this body, men whom it has been my privilege to claim as friends, even from my boyhood. There sits one intelligent and faithful Senator from Clay and Talladega

counties, (Mr. Street), who honored me with a vote when I was scarce out of my teens, for the Legislature of Alabama. There sits another on the outskirts, upon whom my eyes just fell, who was, although younger than myself, almost a playmate. There sits another who had as his companion, one of my dearest friends in the State of Alabama, the Hon. Mr. Hargrove. And there sits another, and there another, and all over this assembly are those of whom no man could wish for a prouder distinction than to say they were his friends. The man, (Judge Stone), who administered the oath to-day to your incoming Chief Magistrate, distinguished for patience, learning, social qualities and incorruptible integrity, examined me when I was admitted to the bar and signed my license to practice law. So, among your Shorters, and your Watts, and Cobbs, and Cloptons, and O'Neals, and Morgans, and Pughs, and Houstons, and Rices, and Jones, and your men of the past, I grew up and had the privilege to claim as my friends.

I do not come to speak to you on a new subject. In 1853, as a member of the Legislature of this State, and as a member of the Committee on Education, it was my privilege to be associated with the poet orator of Alabama, Alexander B. Meek; who stood near where my friend Senator Orr sits, and in a speech of magnificent eloquence, broad in its generalization, far-reaching and sagacious in its outlook, propounded a scheme of public schools for the State of Alabama; and if any of you are interested specially on the subject, I commend you to the report made by Gen. William F. Perry, the first Superintendent in the State, which would well bear republication for its broad and noble views; and for its comprehensiveness and elaborate discussion of the whole question of public schools. I am happy, gentlemen, in having legislators as my auditors. Outside of the ministry I do not know a more honorable or a more responsible trust. The theory that Representatives are chosen because it is inconvenient or impossible for the people to meet *en masse*, is alien to the whole theory of our government. This is a representative government. The people enact, adjudicate and execute laws, not by themselves, but by their chosen and accredited representatives. And it is not that the people cannot assemble *en masse* for legislation or adjudication; but that they ought not to assemble, our theory being that of a representative government, and not of a pure and absolute democracy. Legislators are chosen, or ought to be, for their wisdom, for their integrity, for their statesmanship. The function of the law maker is to study out, not transitory expedients, but the eternal principles which conduce to the strength, prosperity, wisdom and righteousness of a State; and form institutions in accordance with them. He is unworthy to be called a leader or statesman who, from cowardice, or selfishness,

or ignorance, is incapable of compassing in his mind the great ideas of temperance, and knowledge, and justice, and obedience to the laws of God, on which foundation alone the structure of human welfare can be erected, or who is incapable of organizing those ideas into a system; and put that system into successful operation. We have often heard it said, that he is a benefactor who makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before. The legislator, by wise, just and equal laws, seeks to spread competence through the abodes of poverty, to substitute knowledge for ignorance in the minds of the whole people, to develop industries, to make labor productive and remunerative, to promote prosperity, to advance civilization; and, legislators, I appeal to you, if such be the function, can there be, outside of the ministry, a nobler trust for the minds and hearts of men? The sagacious and patriotic legislator, in studying what will most certainly and most permanently accomplish these results, will find free public schools properly organized and maintained, to be the most effective and beneficent of all the forces of civilization. As that is the problem I seek to establish, I repeat it. The Legislature, in seeking to promote the prosperity of its citizens, to advance the welfare and to develop the industries of the State, to exalt it in character and civilization, will find a well devised, well organized, well supervised, and well supported system of public schools, the most beneficent and effective of all governmental agencies. I am quite well aware that I am making a bold statement, and perhaps confronting the preconceived opinions, if not the prejudices, of some of those who are kind enough to honor me with their attention. It would be supererogation—nay, it would be an insult for me to spend time in showing what education is or what are its advantages. Suffice it, for the present, to say that no man is a *true* man—of course I use the term generically—that no man made in the image of God, endowed with capacities capable of indefinite and endless expansion, entrusted with faculties that are as limitless in their progression as the infinitudes of God—that no man can be a true man, in the highest sense of the word; except as he goes away by developed faculties from the brute creation, to the comprehension and discharge of the duties or relations, which link him to society, to humanity, to eternity, to God.

To prepare for complete living, not in the mere material and pecuniary sense, but in the widest and highest sense, is the function which education has to perform. Education to be universal—and I must beg you, my friends, to note what I say, for I shall be obliged, in consequence of the difficulty of speech and the limited time at my disposal, to deal very largely in truisms, and make propositions which I must ask you, in kindness to me, to link together by appropriate reasoning when you shall have gone to your homes;

education, to be universal must be secured and enforced by laws which reach every child. Some tell me that is contrary to the principles of political economy; that the law of supply and demand, which controls the commerce of the world, is quite adequate, under its inspirations and influences, to secure education for all, where education is desirable. That is putting the material on the same basis with the immaterial; that is putting mere clothing and food for the body on the same footing with food for the mind and food for the soul. If you wait for the heathen to apply for the gospel, he will die in his heathenism. The law of supply and demand is inapplicable. Ignorance does not feel its needs, and the want of culture is least felt where the need is greatest.

I concede, as I am addressing legislators, that there is a limit to the legitimate interference of collective opinion with individual independence; but is it not almost a self-evident axiom, that the State should require education up to a certain standard of every human being who is born its citizen. There is a non-interference principle which does not apply. Even John Stuart Mill, the great apostle of the "hands off" theory—of the "root pig or die" theory, as it is sometimes, in homely language, expressed, in his book on Liberty, concedes that universal education must be taken charge of by governments, if children are to be educated. Experience demonstrates that education cannot be left to parental instincts or parental obligations, to denominational zeal and liberality, to private benefaction, and to local communities. The Southern States had as much wealth, per capita, as any communities that ever existed; and yet you know, as I know, that the Southern States, prior to the war, neglected the education of its white people. All over the State of Alabama, prior to 1860, there were thousands and tens of thousands of white citizens, growing up in utter ignorance of the English alphabet. The public school has been the best, the cheapest, the wisest, the *only* instrumentality for securing universal education. Without them, the masses will grow up as they have always grown up, in ignorance. The majority will be left everywhere without the means of instruction.

Universal education was never, in the history of the world, approximately a fact; except when organized, controlled and furnished by government. I pause—and challenge denial with all wealth, with all power, with all civilization, with all Christianity. I challenge the production of a single instance, where there has been anything approximating to universal education, except when it has been furnished by the government. Private schools cannot do it; they never did it. Denominational zeal cannot do it—never did it. Let us look the fact squarely in the face. Without these public schools, one-half if not two-thirds of the people will be doomed to ignorance.

Again; universal education is the truest economy. I recognize the fact that you are bound to economy. I do not believe that, that profound political philosopher, who will be ranked in coming centuries alongside of Plato and Aristotle, John C. Calhoun, ever uttered a more axiomatic truth than when he said; "that for a government to take more from the people than is necessary to a just and economical administration is robbery (applause); and yet, I stand here to assert and to prove, that public schools are the truest economy and that education is the grand condition of wealth in a community. Ignorance is the parent of sloth, improvidence, poverty and crime. Education can diffuse old wealth, and education creates new wealth. A thousand fold more lucrative is the school-house than military conquests. Education develops treasures never dreamed of; prevents extravagant outlay in the search of what does not, and, in the nature of things, cannot exist. Before I left Alabama, I have known men to spend days, weeks, months and hundreds of dollars in search of copper where the conditions for the existence of copper did not exist; and where any tolerably instructed geologist or mineralogist would have saved them their time and money. What is the greatest of the achievements of the science of wealth? You, legislators, are familiar with political economy; you are familiar with the writings of Adam Smith, and Ricardo, and Mill, and Wayland, and Perry, and all the great writers on the science of wealth; and what does that science teach? It teaches that the highest achievement is to convert the consumer into the producer, and the next highest, is to increase the productive power of the producer, and this is only done by increasing intelligence. Change the consumer into the producer, increase his productive capacity, facilitate distribution of the products of labor in promoting the endless variety of exchanges of one commodity for another, and you have what makes up national and individual wealth. This is all dependent on intelligence, on science applied to agriculture, and mining, and mechanics, and the useful arts.

There are some people who object to taxation for schools, because they can see no return in money or money's worth, for the money expended. The aggregate wealth of a country will run along, *pari passu*, with increase of education. School tax is a profitable investment. Education is convertible into dollars and cents, houses and lands, machinery and products. It is the most prolific parent of a nation's riches, the surest means of amassing property, and, therefore, has an economic use and value.

I have before me a mass of facts on this subject, which I can not tire you to present, but I will state summarily, that the most

minute and exhaustive inquiries, in various countries, addressed to leading manufacturers and those who control manufacturing establishments, have developed the truth, of the relation of education to wages, to the relative profitableness of employing intelligent and ignorant laborers and the comparative quality of the work of these two classes of laborers. Ignorant labor is always expensive; the amount and quality of work are proportionate to the intelligence of the laborers; intelligent laborers learn more readily, are more skilful, more easily controlled, perform more and better work, incur less liability to breakage of machinery. There is also with the intelligent laborer, a higher sense of a moral obligation and more regard for the interest of employers. I have not the time to go into these facts this afternoon. I simply assert the proposition, that ignorance, since the world began, never produced any good. You may ransack history and go through your own personal experience, and facts will confirm the statement, that ignorance is impotent for good and impotent for the production of wealth. Now, wealth is the result of the employment of the natural agencies. Matter cannot improve itself. Mind is the improver and converts the rude material into useful and beautiful fabrics. Your money is not coined in the mint, nor struck off by your bank-note manufacturers, but bears the imprint and superscription of the school-house. Knowledge multiplies the value and the productive power of muscular efforts. The product of the machinery of Great Britain is equal to the labor of hundreds of millions of human hands. Let me make a comparison. Of the patents issued out of the Patent Office of the General Government at Washington, the ratio of those credited to Arkansas, is one to every 37,267 inhabitants. The patents issued in Connecticut are one to every 695 inhabitants. The internal revenue in the State of Arkansas is twenty-six cents *per capita*; in the State of Connecticut it is \$2 54 *per capita*. In Connecticut public schools abound—education is universal. Arkansas is—worse than Alabama. (Applause).

I must ask you to bear with me with a little patience, because I am paying you the very highest compliment that I know how to pay you, and that is to address myself to your intelligence.

Mind is a partner in what the body does. Ignorance sits stupidly by and bungles. This instrument here which emits gas, this ink-stand, this tumbler, this mallet, that chandelier, this house, every steam engine, every appliance for facilitating locomotion or labor, is a solidified mechanical or geometrical problem. It is matter vitalized and organized by intelligence. And thus it is, that intelligence and wealth sustain the relation to each other of cause and effect.

As a mere machine of production, a laborer, unskilled and uned-

ucated, produces twenty-five per cent. less than a skilled and educated one—in other words, the illiterate laborer is not as profitable as the educated laborer. That is a well established statistical fact, that the laborer plus the common school education will, at the end of the year, have produced twenty-five per cent. more of valuable products than if he had remained uneducated. In Alabama, about 160,000 votes were cast at the polls at the election for Governor; and the vote of Alabama at this gubernatorial election exceeded by about 30,000, the number of voters in the State of Alabama who cannot read the tickets they put in the ballot-box. I mean to say that in the State of Alabama there are, to-day, over 130,000 men, grown up men and citizens, endowed with suffrage, who cannot read their ballots, and did not know whether they voted for Garfield or Hancock, for O'Neal, or really, now, I have forgotten who ran against Gov. O'Neal.

Gov. Watts. Sheffield.

Dr. Curry. I beg pardon, my friends, I don't know any politics in my speeches on education. I did not hesitate as to the name because I meant to cast any disrespect. I want to see the time come when education will be taken out of politics, when we shall have no party machinery in the education of the children of this land, when the office of Superintendent of Education shall not be a political one, when Public Schools shall be as impreguably fixed in the minds and hearts of the people as the right of trial by jury. And I want to see the day come when every child in Alabama, white and black, shall have the privilege of an education without money and without price. (Long applause). In Alabama, there were by census of 1880, 132,526 illiterate male adults. Putting the annual product at \$100, with education, the labor, as I have said, will be increased twenty-five per cent. That will be \$3,313,150. Now, add one-half for female adults and you have \$4,969,725. That at six per cent. interest would be \$298,000 in round sums, while the whole appropriations for the purposes of education of the State of Alabama is only \$257,000. And so the education of these illiterate adults would more than pay, by increase of production, the entire cost of the present school system and enable you to teach a little longer than you do. The report of the Superintendent shows 388,000 persons of school age: of these, 176,289 are enrolled, leaving 211,711 not at school. Instead of \$298,000 being appropriated for the school system, instead of that beggarly sum, and running only eighty days in the year, the State of Alabama ought to appropriate every year, by State tax or local revenues, \$500,000 for the education of these illiterate children. (Applause).

Some people who say they are poor because others are rich. That is a very false creed, but education creates new values. The

mechanic and useful arts, which give the daily laborer comforts and luxuries that royalty could not command a few centuries ago, are due to intelligent and skilled labor. The government has no power of creating wealth to defray expenses or to raise your \$908,000 of taxes. The people must furnish the revenue and education is the best agency for it. Remember that no "richness of climate, no spontaneous productiveness of soil, no facilities for commerce, no stores of gold or of diamonds garnered in the treasure-chambers of the earth can confer even moderate prosperity upon an uneducated people."

These are low utilitarian views, and I am ashamed of myself for presenting them. But I re-affirm, before proceeding to a higher argument, that on the lowest basis of mere utilitarian or material wealth, the best possible thing a State can do to develop its resources and increase its aggregate wealth, is the universal diffusion of education. The loss through inefficiency of illiterate labor is a small part. Illiteracy produces more than thirty times its proportion of paupers, and more than ten times its proportion of criminals. Education is not a panacea for all ills; it is no substitute for regeneration. The neglected child, however, often become a pauper or criminal, and then we build alms houses, jails and gibbets. Courts sit by until petty faults mature into crimes. Better far is it to build schoolhouses than to build gibbets. If the ability expended in constructing criminal jurisprudence, defining offenses, trying and punishing offenders, or reclaiming men and women, had been given to training the young, our civilization and Christianity would have had a far better record. I do not believe in the hangman's theory, in the repressive and coercive theory. I do not believe in jails and gibbets and locks and bolts and chains and hand-cuffs and whipping-posts, as a means of advancing civilization. Better inform the understanding, better train for virtues; or else for every dollar saved in education, the State will have to pay five dollars for criminal expenses or for the support of paupers.

A higher argument. Popular education is the basis of free institutions. The greatest strain ever put upon our free institutions, was when suddenly suffrage was superadded to citizenship, and the great masses of the recently emancipated slaves were entrusted with the prerogatives of the elective franchise. That cannot be taken away. Yesterday was Thanksgiving day, and if I had worshipped with my fellow citizens, and had been called upon to express one reason for thankfulness to God, I should have said then, as I say now, "I thank God that there is not a slave within the limits of the United States." (Applause). There are two things for which I would volunteer to fight for—one, to prevent the unhallowed union of Church and State, and

the other, to prevent the re-enslavement of the negro. But while I say that, I must be allowed to say, that suffrage is not a logical nor a necessary consequence of citizenship, and that ignorance and suffrage are incompatible; and that every ignorant voter, white or black, is a conspirator against the liberties of the people, and a standing menace against the safety and perpetuity of our republican institutions. I stood up in Cleveland, Ohio, the other day, and to six thousand northern men and women I said, as I say here, that interference at elections and intimidation at elections, are wholly unjustifiable, inexcusable, wrong in principle, indefensible in practice; and yet that intimidation and interference at elections were not the outgrowth of secession, nor an evidence of disloyalty; but that they were, under the present constitution of human nature, the inevitable protests of intelligence and property, and traditional supremacy against ignorance and pauperism, superstition and knavery. (Long applause). I hope you have not seen, as I have seen, men in double column marching up to the polls, in servile submission to a leader, depositing their ballots in the box, without any more knowledge or comprehension of what they were doing or of the issues involved in the contest, than the man in the moon knows what my friend before me is thinking of at this moment. This mass of stupid illiteracy is an impediment to free government, to representative institutions. It fosters indirection, trickery, bribery and corruption; it engenders and creates bossism—and God protect you from it here in Alabama. (Applause). A demagogue, rioting in his unholy ambition, covetous of high places, indifferent as to the manner in which he reaches them, uses vile means to secure the votes of this ignorant mass; and at the next election, some other ambitious demagogue, seeing the means which the previous one had used, resorts to viler means, to baser and lower and more abandoned tricks, and thus, step by step, by a gradation as inevitable as the law of death, drags down the voter to a lower and a lower depth of subserviency. And that is not all. It not only affects the voter but it affects the representative. Lowering the franchise, lower the representative. As the voter is degraded and sinks into a deeper abyss, so the representative, reflecting the will, the conscience, the intelligence of his constituency, goes lower and lower at every successive election. This is why I say that an ignorant voter is a conspirator against the liberties of the country.

Laws require a child to be fed and clothed, and we punish infanticide. We adopt sanitary regulations, and we try to blockade against contagion. Man has higher interests than mere physical life, has other needs than bread and raiment; he is in danger of a pestilence worse than small-pox or yellow-fever, and we ought to use preventive remedies against it.

Now, there are some objections to the public school system. Some people say it is wrong to take their property to educate the children of others. That is a very common remark. But by law you take the body of my child and compel that child to protect your property. You do not hesitate to conscribe the child of the poor man for the defense of your institutions and for the security of your property. But education is a duty growing out of the law of *self-preservation*. A State exists for the protection of people in their natural and civil rights, and for the more perfect development of those rights; and the development of those rights depends on the character and the extent of the schools of the State.

Again, it is said that parents must take care of children. I concede that. I shall not say one word to impair the extent of the obligation of a parent to educate his child. I believe that a man who has the means by sacrifice and toil to educate his children and refuses to do it, is a worse traitor to the State in which he lives than Benedict Arnold was when he tried to give up West Point. That is my idea of the extent of parental obligation. But it is no news to us, that these misapplied notions of liberty are a real obstacle to the fulfillment by the State of its duties. "To bring a child into existence without a fair prospect of being able, not only to provide food for its body but instruction and training for its mind, is a *moral crime*, both against the offspring and against society." "If the parent does not fulfill this obligation, the State ought to see it fulfilled, at the charge, as far as possible, of the parent." (2 S. Mill).

There may be raised an objection that it is best that the lower class remain in ignorance. I have heard that, since I have been in Montgomery. Need I remark that no mistake could be more dangerous. In a country like ours, it should be our object to see that every class is "sufficiently educated to read and understand something of the public questions and the discussions arising upon them. Without this you had as well place a powder magazine beneath your habitations and institutions. It is making two strata—the upper and thin stratum of arrogance, maintained by terrorism—the lower, a thick stratum of cross ignorance and vague prejudice, liable at any moment to be inflamed by fanaticism or exploded by unreason. The only hope of society is to give all classes, by education, a chance at a fair understanding of public questions and thus put them out of the reach of incendiary fanatics and demagogues."

Why should we discuss this question? It is a *res adjudicata*. The constitution requires it; every civilized government in the world requires it, and to fight against it would be as futile as to attempt to turn back the shadow on a sun-dial. The State for

its own preservation and welfare, and the general good, takes care that *all the people* possess the rudiments of knowledge *by the only* means which can secure that result. The State protects itself against ignorance, pauperism, lawlessness and dissolution. Children belong as much to the State as they do to the parent, and for a longer period, and must not be left to grow up in swarms as drones and as pests of society.

Public schools are cheaper than private schools. The partial system is always attended with greater expense both as to tuition and schoolrooms. What is paid to private schools, if properly managed and distributed, would educate all the children of the State.

Public schools are permanent. The State never dies. Private schools are spasmodic, uncertain and wanting in system. Public schools have unity, system, combination, organization, superintendence, and can be graded and classified. Teachers can economize time, teaching, ability, and adapt instruction to the many. When graded, strength is put where needed, and there should be little waste of skilled labor.

Counties, towns and school districts, should be empowered to levy local taxes for the support of schools, and third, that efficient provision should be made for teachers' institutes and normal schools to fit boys and girls for teaching in public schools. Here is a picture of my friend, General Clanton, as brave a man as ever walked the earth; unselfish, courageous, chivalric, large souled, patriotic. Friends desired to perpetuate his features. They employed an artist, of more or less skill, to put upon a piece of dead canvass the features of that noble Alabama patriot. The artist, full of his subject, catching inspiration from the heroism and nobility of the man, sits hour by hour, day by day; and seeks by shading here, by erasing there, by adding here, toilsomely, painfully, gradually, progressively, to bring out the features and the character, so that those who stand before the picture shall recognize it as Gen. Clanton. But that artist standing by that canvass is dealing with dead, inert, unsympathizing, irresponsible, matter. A man takes a piece of marble; it is in a rough state; he chips it away here and chips it away there, until after awhile, by slow and toilsome process, the man of genius, skill and experience, causes that rough marble to come out into living shape so that eyes, ears, nose, mouth, face, all have been wrought from the dead, unthinking, irresponsible marble and it stands out a living thing, so that you speak to it and expect it to return your speech. But here is a teacher put into a school room, dealing with your daughter and your son—not dead canvass like that, not irresponsible, inert, unsympathizing marble or granite. A teacher stands before a child, made in the image of God, with potencies and capacities

capable of indefinite expansion, quick, sympathetic, responsive to every touch, as delicate as a mimosa plant, to be trained, to be developed, expanded, educated. You would not employ an inexperienced, unskilled man or woman to make a painting upon a dead canvass, but you will employ a stupid, ignorant, untrained boy or girl to train an immortal mind with deific aspirations, simply because you can get him or her for twenty dollars a month. (Prolonged applause.) Teaching is an art; teaching is a profession; there is a science of education; it is based on the human soul; on the faculties of the human mind. A real teacher, a live teacher, loving the work, loving the children, understanding the matter to be taught, the mind to be educated and the method of education, goes to the work with inspiration. Were you ever in Germany? Well, when you go to Germany, I want you to go to a public school, and you will see a teacher teaching a class in geography. When I went to school they taught geography with a little old map, which was held up before me. I never saw a globe then; and I got an idea that north was always up, and for a stream to run north was for it to run up hill, and that was contrary to all common sense; for I always held up my map before me in this manner, and it looked singular for a stream to run up hill. Now, go to a public school in Germany, and in some parts of the United States, and what do you see? Here is a black board; the teacher calls up the class in geography, he takes his chalk and runs a line down the black board in a certain direction. As soon as he does it the children—not one by one, but all of them at once call out the name of a river, the teacher takes his chalk and runs another little line, and they call out the tributary of that river; and he runs another line and they call out the name of another tributary, and this is continued until the gulf or bay is reached, the name of each stream being promptly named by the children, then he will make a dot here, and the name of a town is announced, another and the capital, then another and they announce the name of a town of commercial importance, then a town noted for its manufacturing, and so on through a long list of towns; then the teacher draws a few more lines and the children call out the name of some mountains; and finally the teacher draws a peculiar shaped line around the whole and the children in a voice call out the name of the country. When this is all gone through with the teacher has drawn a perfect map of the country, ready to be lithographed and distributed to the world; and when he is done he is all aglow with his work, and in as profuse perspiration as I am at this moment, and the children are as much excited as some of you who expect to attend the inaugural ball.

There is the Normal College at Nashville, where the Peabody

Fund is sustaining ten Alabama boys and girls. We aided your schools at Florence, Marion and Huntsville. Train your teachers at these institutions so they may be prepared to do their work nobly and well.

A few more words and I close, much to your gratification, no doubt. (Voices: No, no, go on.)

My heart bounded within me to-day as I read Governor Cobb's message. He is an old constituent of mine. That is the kind of a constituent I had when I went to Congress. My heart bounded with admiration, thrilled with pride as I read his message, and as I stood out on the portico to-day, and heard that gallant soldier and patriot, your present Governor, telling about the resources of Alabama; and about the capabilities of this great State and pointed out what a grand and glorious future loomed up before you, if you rightly used your opportunities and developed the resources at your command. There is mineral wealth enough in Alabama to enrich an empire; you have ten thousand square miles of coal fields. In 1881 four hundred thousand tons of coal were mined against ten thousand in 1870. You have iron ore of the best quality in close proximity, two thousand miles of railroad transportation, and water transportation quite extensive in various parts of the State. You have soil adapted to vegetables and fruits; the timber trade is rapidly growing; immense areas are devoted to the cultivation of cotton and the cereals. These are grand exhibits for the State; the State wants more manufacturing, more mining, more mechanical industries, diversified labor, sub-divided farms. There were fifty-five thousand, one hundred and twenty-eight farms in the State in 1860, and one hundred and thirty-five thousand, eight hundred and sixty-four in 1880. You need improved tillage and husbandry, you need that these red old hills and deep gullies, and these fields that are growing up in broom sedge should be arrested in their career of poverty and death, and made green by cattle-sustaining grasses; you need improved stock and good country roads, and curs and hounds all immolated. (Laughter.) You need the grog shops to be starved out, not so much by prohibition or local option law as by want of patronage. (Applause.)

I do not agree with one of your bankers, who said lately in New York, that Alabama was the most prosperous section of the United States. I do not believe the South is as prosperous as the North. Do you know—yes: you know, for you are legislators, (Applause), that from 1860 to 1870 the decrease in taxable products in all the Southern States was almost incalculable. Do you also know that from 1870 to 1880, in the last decade, when we are having manufactures, getting big prices for cotton, diversifying our labor, in every Southern State except North Carolina, Geor-

gia and Texas there has been a decrease. The figures of the census of the United States and of your auditor do not exactly harmonize. Taking the figures according to the census, the decrease in Alabama from 1870 to 1880 was thirty-two million dollars. According to the auditor, it is only about two million dollars: but still it is a decrease. The time is coming when we will change and go upwards.

Now, my last remark, I said my heart thrilled within me, pulsed with quick beats and heart-joys when I heard this about the State of Alabama. But there are other forms of wealth besides agricultural products and mineral deposits. The realm of intelligence is far wider than the area from Jackson to Baldwin, or from Chambers to Pickens. The means of education can work up the young men into mechanics, scientific farmers, poets, orators, scholars, artists and jurists. Nations are ruled by ideas and not by Parrott and needle guns; a thought dominates the world. Behind the soldier is the school-house. Aristotle conquered more worlds than Alexander, his illustrious pupil. (Applause). And the dominion of Aristotle has not ceased to this day.

Public schools, the offspring of advancing civilization, applicable to the whole mass of children do not exist in barbarous life. I would encourage the University and the Agricultural and Mechanical College: I would build up your higher institutions of learning; but then there is hardly one in fifty thousand that ever sees those colleges. The youth of Alabama are learning in the public schools; in these institutions they are to be molded into intelligent and patriotic citizens, and become factors of advanced civilization.

One more word, and I will relieve your exhausted patience. I have heard it said that education is very useful for the lawyer and the doctor; and the engineer and the preacher; and the professional man, but for the mechanic and farmer, and for other pursuits education is not so useful. Now, I have shown to you that all improvement in agriculture and mechanics is the result of the application of science to the useful arts. I should not like to belong to a trade or profession, which was degraded by saying that the other professions are fit for intelligent people; but in my profession intelligence is not necessary. A man is a good deal more than his trade: a man is more than a farmer: more than a blacksmith: more than a tailor: more than a lawyer; more than a doctor: more than even a member of the legislature. (Laughter). A man touches society at many points. There are interlacing relationships which connect him with humanity, with the world to come, with God. A woman is a sister and a wife and a mother: a man is a husband and a father and a brother: he is a citizen, law-maker, jurymen, voter, No man can say in advance what shall be the profession or life of his child. There is no aristocracy in this land which limits intelli-

gence and the mental capacities to a certain family. We all belong to the royal family. (Applause).

A few years ago I was in Paris. There was a young Swedish lady of rare intelligence, curious in her inquiries, beautiful in her person; graceful in her manner; between whom and myself there were frequent controversies as to the relative value of our respective institutions. That was in 1868, just after the war, when we were irritated and somewhat sore. I defended, as best I could, republican institutions against her tact, her ridicule, her witticism. Then, as now, in the war, since the war, living or dying I believe in a republican government and not in a kingly government. (Applause). One day a gentleman visited my wife and myself. He sent up his card and we went down, and sat and talked for some time. He was a magnificent man. You, Gov. Watts, saw him at Shiloh, as in his hunting shirt, he rode by on that splendid charger. It did seem as if every God had set his seal upon him to give the world assurance of a man. Erect in his carriage, striking in his personal appearance, expansive forehead, lustrous eagle eye, face radiant with intelligence, he bore himself in imperial majesty as a king and a ruler. As he went out, this Swedish girl, eagerly, anxiously, all aglow with excitement and homage and admiration, ran to my wife and myself and said "who is that man? who is that man?" And I quietly, and with a good deal of pride, said "that is one of our royal family." "It was John C. Breckinridge." (Prolonged applause).

I have in my library in a little frame, a paper rather scarred and blurred by age, which reads thus;—

GREENVILLE, TENN., February 2d, 1828.

Received of Mr. Jarnigan, for making a coat, three dollars and fifty cents.

ANDREW JOHNSON.

I think that is a characteristic American curiosity. It illustrates our institutions; it shows the capability of progress; the supremacy over the accidents of birth and relations of position; it shows that the prizes of life are open to competition of all; it shows that the highest positions in this country are within the reach of a cultivated mind and developed powers.

I come to you to-day, to Alabama that I love, love as much as you can love; I come to plead not for coal and iron, not that water be applied to machinery, but I come to plead very much as the lawyer did for an eminent prisoner, on trial for his life. The judge interrupted and tried to silence him, and the lawyer, turning to the judge, said: "If your Honor please, I am pleading

for a human life." And so, this afternoon, to this patient auditory, I am pleading for the life of Alabama. I am pleading for the higher civilization of the State. I am pleading for the children of Alabama. I am pleading that this State, panoplied in her strength, rising in the full development of all her material resources, shall have, crowning and adorning all, every child, enlarged and developed to its utmost capacity, by the liberal legislation of a loving mother. (Long and loud applause.)